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WOMEN'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON

Veteran protester gives pointers on what to pack and how to prepare

metroLIFE

TRUMP CHANGE: MINIMUM PRICE FOR TORONTO LUXURY TOWER & RESIDENCES SET AT $298M

metroNEWS

Toronto metro

Your essential daily news | THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2017 | High 5°C/Low -7°C Rainy

SPECIAL MILLENNIALS ARE CHANGING TORONTO EDITION

HOW PENNY IS SAVING TORONTO'S POOLS

WHY TEA IS MAKING A COMEBACK WITH THE NEXT GENERATION

WHAT IS BEING USED TO CREATE FUEL LOGS FOR REFUGEE CAMPS

WHO IS PUTTING CANADIAN FASHION ON THE MAP — THESE TORONTO SISTERS ARE

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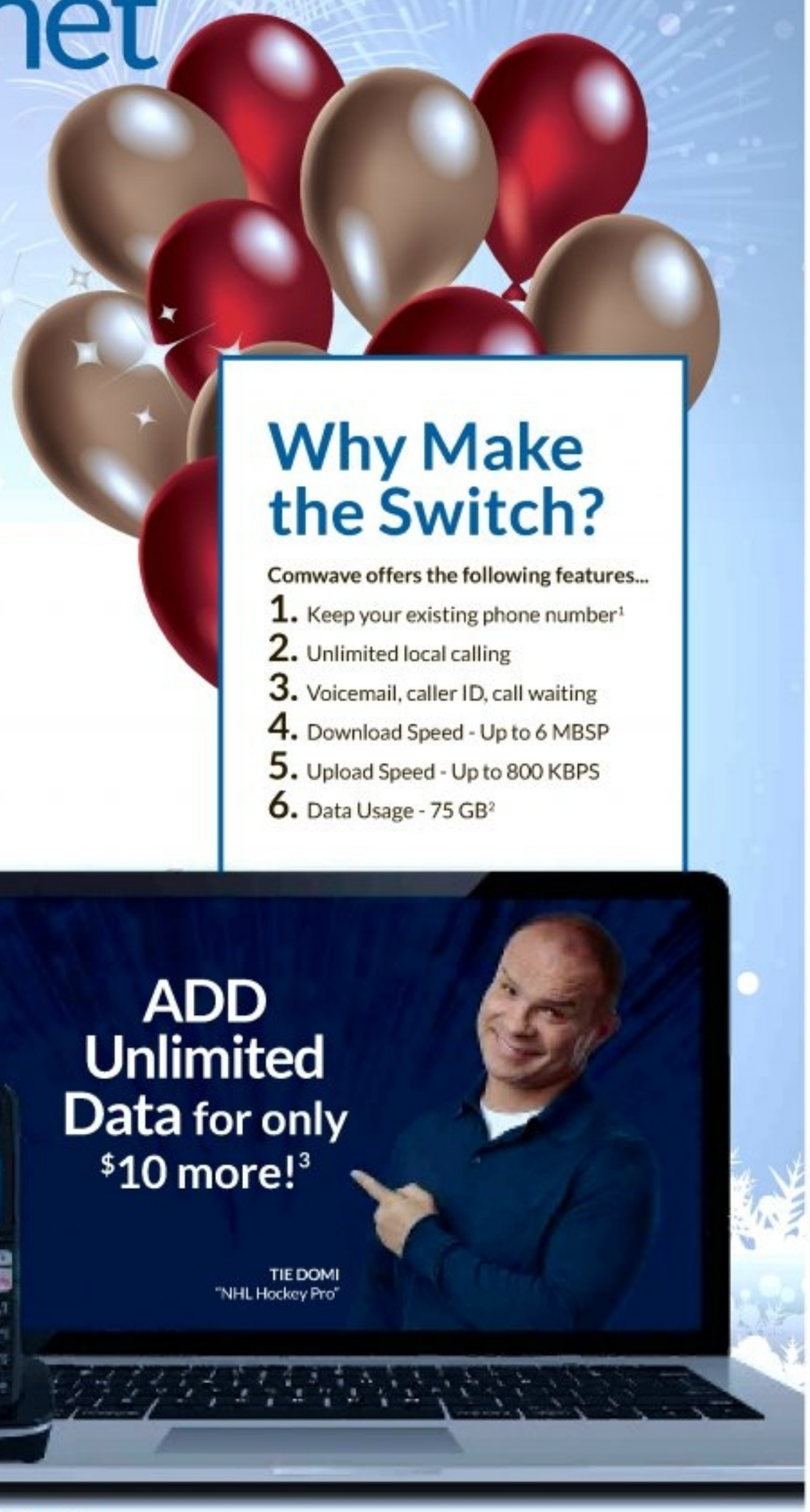

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Joseph Boyden sorry 'for taking up too much airtime' in discussing indigenous issues, CBC says.

52%

Increase in suspected fraudulent applications in Canada since 2013

Mortgage cheats the new 'normal'

REAL ESTATE

Rising prices suggest it may be 'fraud for shelter' in T.O.

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

Mortgage fraud is skyrocketing in Canada, new statistics say, and there may be a link to Toronto's hot housing market.

A report from credit agency Equifax Canada, released Wednesday, revealed a 52 per cent increase in suspected fraudulent mortgage applications since 2013.

Equifax does not break down the increase by city or provide the number of suspected fraudulent applications since 2013.

Of applications flagged for fraud, 67 per cent were from Ontario while the next highest was 12 per cent from B.C.

Tara Zecevic, vice-president of customer insight at Equifax Canada, said this includes attempts at fraud and a "pendulum" that can swing from "slightly embellishing" income in a bidding war, to organized crime rings laundering money.

Although it's hard to say for sure, she said there is potentially a connection to rising Toronto prices and people desperate to get into the market at all costs.

"It's becoming increasingly difficult. There's a lot of competition you get when you're looking for a property," she said.

Zecevic said although it can be seen as a "victimless crime," embellishing income can also hurt homebuyers in the long run if they overextend their debt.

Mark Cashin, a Toronto-area mortgage broker, said this kind of "fraud for shelter" is "more of a reality than it has ever been."

"When you give people limited choices and they have to provide a roof over their family's heads, they're going to do what they have to do to survive," he said

He blames a supply problem and says the government has only made the problem worse with mortgage rules that make it harder for people to qualify.

But Murtaza Haider, a professor of real-estate economics at Ryerson University, said he does not think the numbers are cause for alarm.

"I think it is pretty much normal for people to embellish their incomes," he said.

NO BIG DEAL?

A survey also released by Equifax Canada found **13 per cent of Canadians felt it was OK** to tell a "little white lie" to get the house they want when applying for a mortgage.

LUXURY LIVING

Majority of Trump tower being sold off

Commercial real-estate company CBRE has officially launched the sell-off of the majority of Toronto's troubled Trump International Hotel Tower and the Trump Residences at Bay and Adelaide streets.

The sale being handled by receiver FTI Consulting Canada was approved by the courts on Jan. 4. It comprises 211 hotel and 74 residential units and the building's retail space, including the spa, the Calvin bar and upscale America restaurant.

The receiver has set a minimum price of $298 million for the 65-storey luxury tower, and the sale is already receiving global interest from groups in Europe, Asia, the U.S. and some larger Canadian groups, said CBRE executive vice-president Bill Stone.

"We're encouraged by the initial response. This is a rare commodity. There are not a lot of luxury hotels available in North America at this point," he said.

CBRE has handled the sale of other prestigious Toronto hotels, including the Royal York, the Intercontinental and the Four Seasons. Stone characterized the five-star Trump Tower as a premium opportunity.

Although he would not provide the occupancy rate on the Trump hotel, Stone said, "It is holding its own."

> **This is a rare commodity.**
> Bill Stone

The bid date of Feb. 15 means the sale is expected to close this year, he said.

The sale does not include 50 hotel suites and 44 condos in the building that are owned by other investors.

Since opening in 2012, the Trump International Hotel Tower and Residences has been plagued by slow sales.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A group of owners in the property, who claim to be the victims of misleading marketing, are suing the property's developer, Talon International and the business organization owned by U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, which manages it and licensed the use of its name on the property.

In November, a lawyer for Trump called the suit "a desperate, last-ditch attempt by a small group of buyers to get out of what were clear and unequivocal purchase contracts."
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Toronto's friendly flu fighter

HEALTH

Officials say season is busy yet predictable across the city

Genna Buck
Metro | Toronto

Dr. Irene Armstrong is Toronto's flu fighter in chief.

Armstrong is the city's associate medical officer of health in charge of flu. That makes her the key person responsible for monitoring and taming the spread of all the hacking and coughing that's taken Toronto by storm.

Every confirmed case of the flu in the city passes through her office. And right now, they're coming in thick and fast.

"You can imagine there's quite a pile" of cases pouring in every day, Armstrong said. "Our numbers are still going up. I don't think we've peaked yet."

Hospitals and nursing homes have been hit especially hard this year, as the strain of influenza going around, H3N2, tends to hit the elderly and frail the hardest. As of Jan. 5, there were 30 influenza outbreaks going on in institutions around the city.

Clerical staff are entering reports of flu and other respiratory virus outbreaks into the computer system to monitor the situation. Once a suspected outbreak of flu or another respiratory virus is reported, public health nurses and inspectors are dispatched to assess the situation and give support.

Their advice is often to isolate sick people, cancel group activities, amp up hygiene and give patients and unvaccinated staff an antiviral medication to prevent the spread.

Armstrong's days, meanwhile, are filled with meetings and calls, calls and meetings with public health inspectors, with management, with hospitals and nursing homes and the media.

There have been 477 flu cases reported in Toronto since the fall. The average for this time of year is 379. Last year at this time there were only 40, but there was a spike of cases in March, Armstrong said.

She considers it a busy but predictable flu season compounded by simultaneous outbreaks of other cough and cold-causing viruses, such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

And, for her team, that means long days, overtime and keeping staff on call.

"We come in earlier, stay later," Armstrong said. "It's sort of the same work we're used to doing, but a lot more."

She has some words of wisdom for anyone looking to make her job a bit easier: wash your hands, stay home if you're sick, and get a flu shot.

Everyone should get it, even if they "never get sick," Armstrong said: You could get it, have no symptoms, and still infect others.

"Sure, you're not worried about yourself, but you could be passing it to older people, sick people, pregnant women," she said. "You don't want to do that."

MAPPED | FLU GOES VIRAL

Around the city, 30 different hospitals and care homes are dealing with outbreaks of influenza. That's not to mention the other respiratory viruses and stomach flus that plague us this time of year.

477 Flu cases this season

> "Our numbers are still going up. I don't think we've peaked yet."
> Dr. Irene Armstrong

Dr. Irene Armstrong, Toronto's Associate Medical Officer of Health, has some words of wisdom for anyone who wants to avoid the flu. EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

PENNY OLEKSIAK

Olympic medallist makes political splash to save public pools

Sixteen-year-old Penny Oleksiak caught the attention of Mayor John Tory when she tweeted her support for Toronto swimming facilities threatened by budget cuts. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO FILE

Tara Deschamps
For Metro | Toronto

Olympic swimmer Penny Oleksiak is used to making a splash, just not in the political arena.

But that's exactly what she did this week when she caught the attention of Mayor John Tory by tweeting her support for Toronto swimming facilities threatened by budget cuts.

"It's important to teach kids how to swim … It saves lives and is a good physical activity," tweeted Oleksiak, who takes classes at Monarch Park Collegiate when she's not racking up medals in the water.

As Toronto looks for ways to balance its budget, 48 public pools are at risk of closure and swimming programs at 10 Toronto District School Board facilities could be cancelled.

Those in peril include the S.H. Armstrong Community Centre pool, used by Duke of Connaught Public School. Oleksiak referenced the pool in her tweet.

The pool cuts could save $2.73 million, barely a dent in the city's $91-million shortfall.

Tory, who frequently tweeted his support for Oleksiak when she won four medals at the Rio Olympics during the summer, rushed to quell her worries.

"Gold medal message received," the mayor tweeted. "I've asked Budget Chief Gary Crawford to save these pools."

Chris Wilson, the marketing director at Swimming Canada, said he was "pleased" the mayor had decided to look for a solution that would keep pools open.

"Pools are always looked at to save money, but they bring a lot to the community and are valuable assets," he said. "To shut down as many as 48 at one time would be one of the most disastrous and shortsighted decisions."

BY THE NUMBERS SWIMMING PROGRAMS

$2.73M

The city would **save $2.73 million** with cuts to public pools and swim programs.

$91M

Those savings would barely put a dent in the city's **$91 million budgetary shortfall.**

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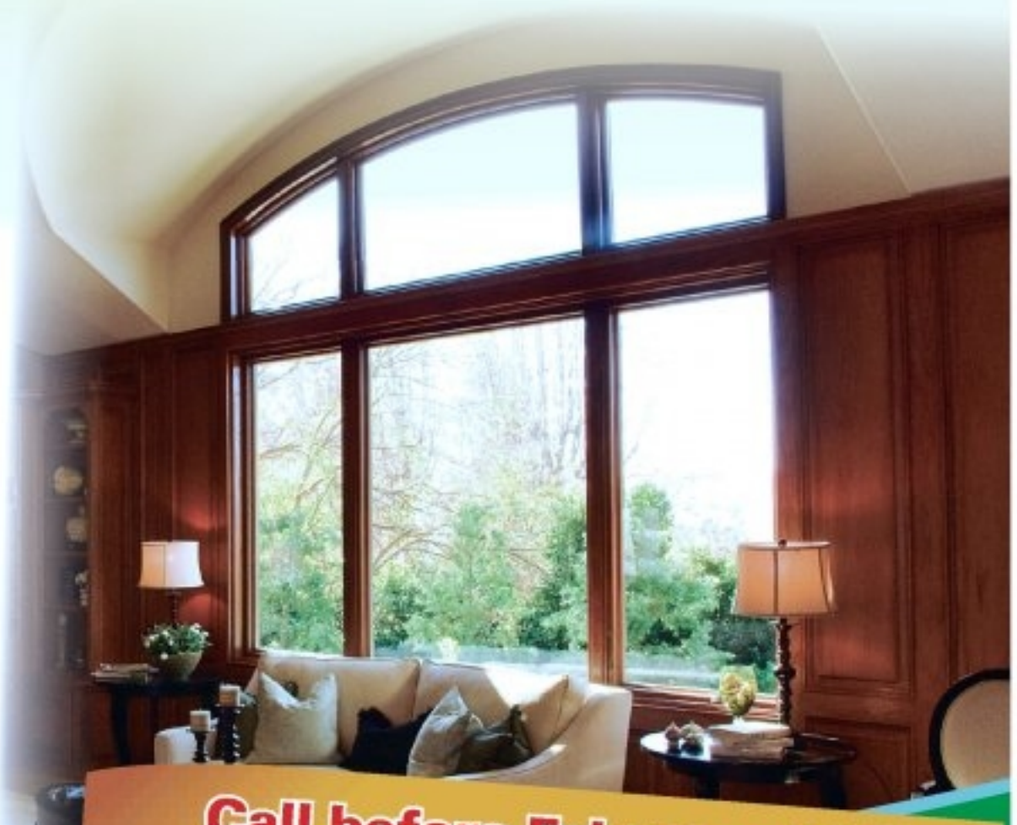

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Inspiring a community

DIVERSITY

New minister sends positive message

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Ahmed Hussen's selection as a minister is sending powerful waves through the local Somali community, even before he starts having an impact on the complex immigration portfolio.

"His appointment breaks a barrier," said Osman Ali, director of the Somali Canadian Association of Etobicoke.

"No one will look at him first as Somali, African, immigrant, Muslim. That's huge. For him to be in that position is very important for a community that has been marginalized for a long time."

It's especially true for young Somali Canadians — either born here or who came as immigrants — who often get caught up in "bad behaviours and criminal activities," he said. "They'll always look up and say, 'If Ahmed can do it, I can do it too. I can also succeed,'" he said.

Ahmed Hussen was appointed Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, to the delight of the large Somali Canadian community. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appointed Hussen as the new minister of immigration, refugees and citizenship, a cabinet position that's been in the spotlight with the arrival of Syrian refugees.

The move has been hailed as the right one, given Hussen's personal experience. He came to Toronto alone as a refugee teenager from Mogadishu, worked hard through life and education to become an immigration lawyer, before winning the parliamentary seat in the recent federal election, representing the York South-Weston riding.

Having worked as a community organizer should give Hussen ample capacity to be a "great minister," said Ali.

"No one will need to go to Ottawa to explain to him what they're going through. He already knows," he said.

'The true face of Canada'

The appointment of Ahmed Hussen in the new federal cabinet is "a step in the right direction" for Canada's diversity, said Joseph Osuji, a Toronto barrister and founder of Just Society Group.

His group wrote to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau after his first cabinet appointment, complaining about the lack of diversity on Parliament Hill.

Osuji said Canada must be seen as a multicultural society and global role model.

"Now everybody is uncertain about what's going to happen in the U.S. with the new president," he said. "Trudeau is showing we don't just talk about diversity. We act like it. That's the true face of Canada."

Ahmed Hussen greets a supporter. TORSTAR

Syed Hussan is among those calling for more security for newcomers. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Advocates lobby to protect migrants

A day after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau shuffled the ministers in charge of immigration and employment, immigrant rights groups across Canada are calling for greater security and mobility for newcomers.

"The vast majority of new immigrants to Canada are actually either undocumented or have temporary status," said Syed Hussan, member of the Toronto-based Migrant Workers Alliance for Change.

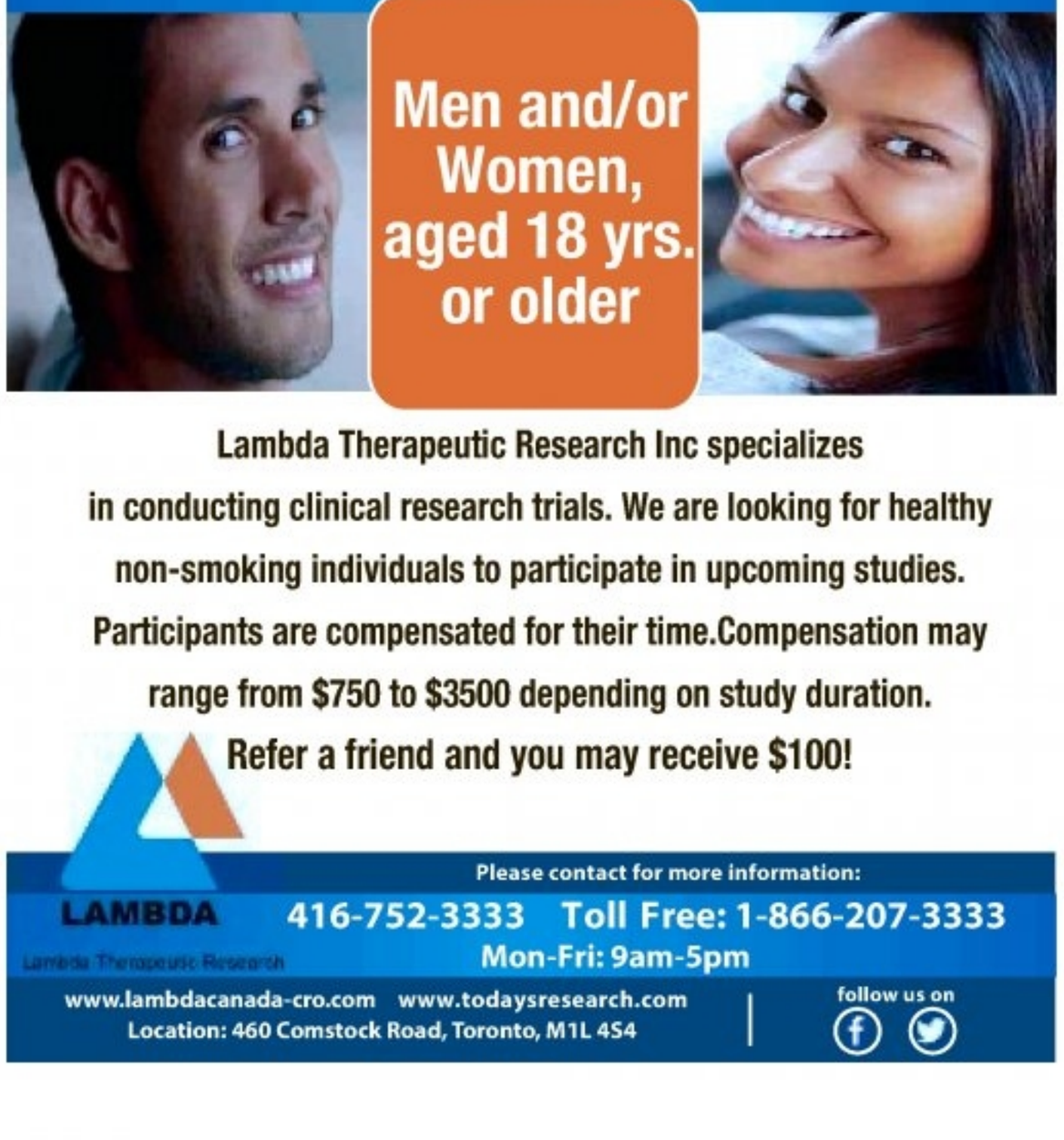
"That puts them in precarious conditions and the ministers need to immediately turn their attention to these issues."

Hussan's group has long been calling for migrant workers to be granted permanent residence status, claiming deporting them could adversely affect the country's economic growth.

Advocates want to see the introduction of an open work permit for foreign workers waiting for permanent status. Most of these workers are "stuck" in low-wage jobs with one employer, said Hussan.

"We've heard numerous reports of abuse and exploitation in workplaces, unpaid overtime work and poor working conditions," he said. "The administration needs to protect these people, and it's important that the new ministers reach out to these workers to hear from them directly."

GILBERT NGABO/METRO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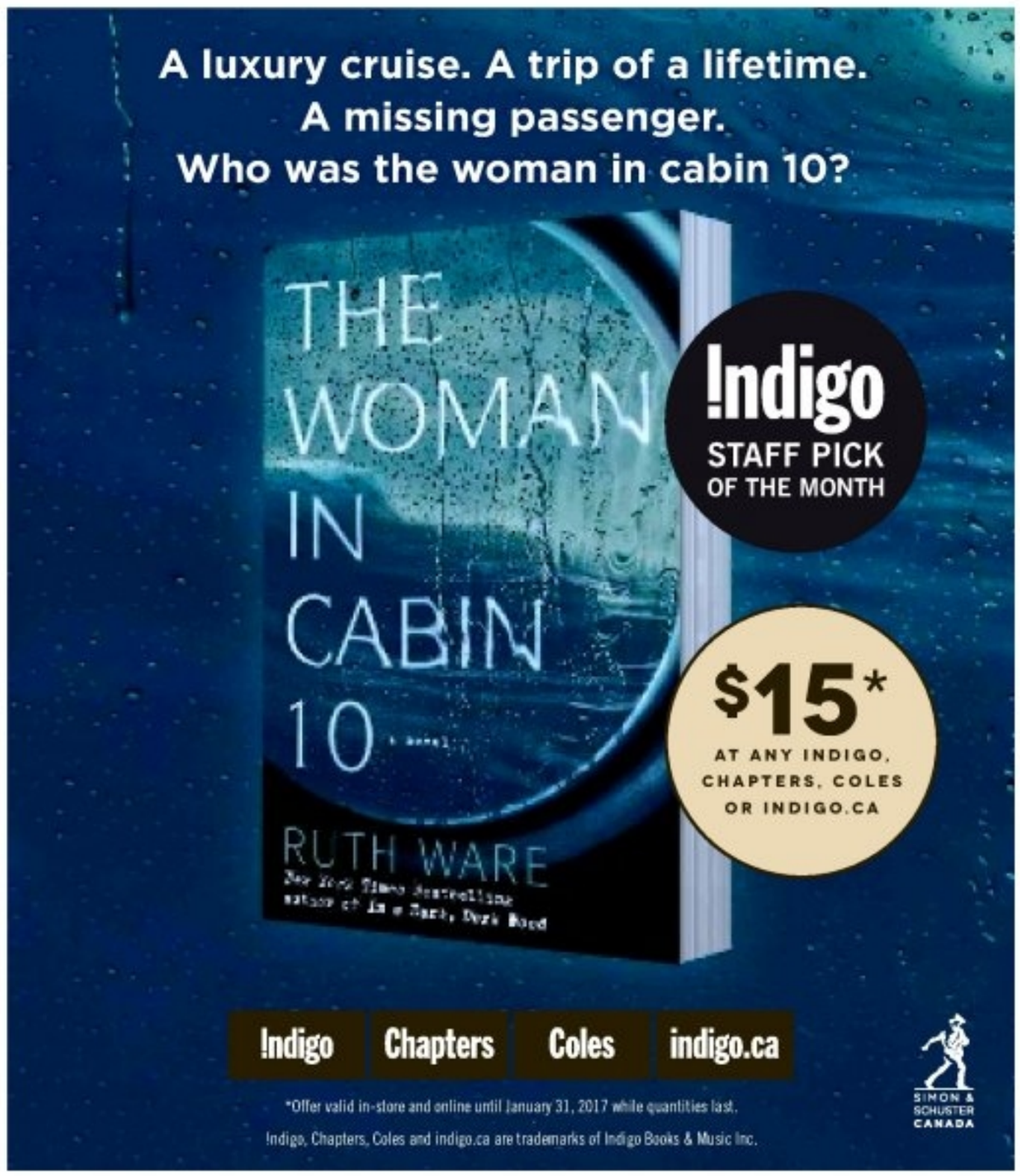
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Sparks ignite on student invention

Students from the University of Toronto are competing in this year's Hult Prize competition. They've developed a method of using coffee grounds as an alternative to firewood.
LANCE MCMILLAN/FOR METRO

ENVIRONMENT

Safer, greener alternative to firewood for refugees

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

University of Toronto students are using refuse to help refugees.

Students from the business and engineering programs have partnered to build Moto, a fuel log made from used coffee grounds, wax and sugar that acts as substitute for firewood.

"Thousands of women and children from refugee camps in Africa spend hours and hours collecting firewood," said Sam Bennett, an MBA student at UofT's Rotman School of Management.

"Not only is it exhausting for them, it is also dangerous. Through our research we found that very often they are attacked and assaulted."

Bennett hopes that Moto can serve as a safer, environmentally-friendly alternative to firewood, which many refugees rely on for heating and cooking.

With coffee grounds collected from local Starbucks, Second Cup and Tim Hortons, the group has gone through different mixes to produce the current fuel log.

Moto — a Swahili word that means fire — can burn for more than an hour.

"We're using low tech to produce it, but I'm sure the final optimized product will be more effective than firewood," Bennett said.

The project is part of the Hult Prize competition, which encourages university students to tackle some of the world's most pressing issues. The UofT group will be headed to Shanghai in March for the next stage of the contest.

If they win, they'll receive $1 million to implement their venture.

Bennett said the long-term plan for the group is to establish a manufacturing plant in Africa, which will allow them to produce the material at a cheaper price and also employ local people.

"I think this would really improve people's lives," he said. "And the less we use firewood, the better the environment is protected."

TEALISH

Toronto millennials just won't leaf those tea kettles alone

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

Bridgit Lanni sips from a mug of Pina Colada tea at Toronto's Tealish, a speciality tea store that has a large millennial customer base. LANCE MCMILLAN/FOR METRO

If English Breakfast is not your cup of tea you can always check out Stress Buster, Delicious Detox, or customer favourite "Hangover Helper."

The quirky blends at Toronto's Tealish are a reflection of the store's customer base.

Rather than old ladies or British ex-pats, the west-end shop has found itself catering mostly to millennials, said manager Bridgit Lanni.

"A lot of people are coming in asking for a good substitute to coffee," the 26-year-old said. "People are trying to be more health conscious as well."

Younger people, aged roughly 19-37, make up more than a third of Canadian tea drinkers, according to new market research commissioned by the Tea and Herbal Association of Canada.

The association predicts that by 2020, millennial spending on tea will double.

President Louise Roberge said millennials appreciate the different varieties of tea that have come on to the market in the last few years.

"I think it's also discovering the world through tea," she said.

Britt Aharoni is a recent tea convert. She started sipping tea when she moved into a new condo by herself and wanted something "comforting."

Contrary to the idea of "the old woman with the shawl and the fire place," she said she's seen a "resurgence" of teas for a younger audience in the past couple of years, which she attributes to speciality chain David's Tea.

But she often picks her favourites up at the supermarket, looking for Fair Trade teas in particular, and eschews any fancy accessories.

"Good old kettle and bag is good enough for me," she said.

TEA FESTIVAL

If you can't get enough of tea you can check out the Toronto Tea Festival, Jan. 28 and 29, at the Toronto Reference Library.

HOAX

Accused fake fire thief is firefighters' colleague

The crew hurried out of their North York station one summer day in August after receiving a call about a fire at a nearby building. The firefighters quickly arrived at the site of the call, only to find out it had been a hoax.

There was no fire in the building. When they returned to the station, they discovered they were missing cellphones, watches, jewelry, credit cards and iPads.

"They were upset that somebody had gone through their things and taken (stuff)," said Toronto fire union chief Frank Ramagnano.

The culprit? One of the firefighters' own colleagues, Toronto police allege.

Veteran Toronto firefighter Joshua Pittarelli-Bucks was charged Aug. 22 with three counts of break-and-enter, false alarm of fire, public mischief and possession of crack cocaine, court documents show.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Woman found guilty of murdering husband

There was no shouting, no protest, no sharp declaration of unfairness or illegality.

Xiu Jin Teng, 41, was silent as a jury found her guilty of the first-degree murder of her husband Dong Huang after a bizarre trial in which she represented herself.

On Friday, she will receive the mandatory sentence of life with no chance of parole for 25 years.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Actor convicted of mischief for hidden camera in condo

An actor has been convicted of two counts of mischief for operating a hidden camera in the Toronto condo he sublet to two women.

J.P. Manoux "acted willfully" in violating the privacy of his tenants, Justice Rebecca Shamai said in a decision delivered in a Toronto court Wednesday morning.

Manoux has appeared on television in roles on Community and ER.

Sentencing is set for Jan. 27.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Home sweet home for fashion sisters

WOMENSWEAR

Being based in Toronto a hurdle — but also a blessing

Nichole Jankowski
For Metro
THE RETAIL INSIDER

Chloé, left, and Parris Gordon at the 2014 Toronto Fashion Week. The sisters have managed to anchor an international fashion brand while remaining in Toronto. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

They're rising stars of the fashion world, and they've decided to shine right here.

Last week, Forbes published its annual 30 Under 30 lists, recognizing young professionals at the top of their fields across 20 different industries. In the arts and style category, two Toronto sisters, Chloé and Parris Gordon, received the nod for their contemporary womenswear brand Beaufille.

It hasn't always been easy sailing for the Gordon sisters, who returned to Toronto after completing degrees at NSCAD University. The decision to anchor their brand here in 2009 was a financial one, but operating outside of a fashion centre has also cost them.

By 2015, it finally looked like things were really taking off. Lady Gaga was photographed wearing their designs, their collections received rave reviews locally, and they even won a Canadian Art and Fashion Award, but they just weren't reaching the retailers they needed.

"If you're not in a London, New York or Paris, you sort of miss networking opportunities or last-minute meetings ... notoriety you would get with the industry being based in those cities," says Parris.

Then came a chance to show at New York Fashion Week. Twenty-five new retailers picked up their line that season. Other offers they even turned down.

"Our ethos has always been to be carefully curated in each market," said Chloé.

In interviews they've said it took their last bit of money to put on that first NYFW presentation. Now they're carried at Net-a-Porter and featured on Vogue.com.

Remaining in Toronto while operating an international fashion brand has other challenges, like finding manufacturers for leather or knitwear.

"It's virtually impossible," say Chloé. "We have shaped our collections around that, which isn't necessarily a good thing."

But one way the sisters believe Toronto has benefited them is in its relative isolation.

"When Chloé and I went to art school in Halifax there was such limitless creativity because there were no billboards or big industry distractions," says Parris. "You really just focused in on you. A good complaint about New York Fashion Week is that critics and influencers are saying so much looks the same."

Being in Toronto, it seems, is finally starting to pay off.

DESIGN OFFSITE

A story in every quill box

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Good design is about more than fancy chairs and minimalist typefaces.

The Toronto Design Offsite Festival began in 2011 as a showcase for art and design dedicated to making our city more beautiful, livable and inclusive. To celebrate Design Offsite's seventh year, Metro creative director Jason Logan has hand-picked a list of exhibitions to check out.

We're profiling one every day until the festival kicks off Jan. 16.

METRO PICKS

Quill boxes, made from porcupine quills, birch bark and sweetgrass, are an example of traditional Ojibway art. CONTRIBUTED

Ojibway quillwork

Tracey Pawis' family has been sewing Ojibway quill boxes for five generations.

Normally, Pawis' work would be on display in the G'zaagin Art Gallery in Port Parry, Ont., but next week, her intricate quillwork creations will be making the trip to Toronto.

Each box, built of birch bark, sweetgrass and dyed porcupine quills, tells a story, Pawis says.

"There's a more wholesome and beautiful way of living that we have lived our whole lives and that shows through our artwork," she said.

Pawis hopes seeing quillwork firsthand will give people a better understanding and appreciation of Ojibway culture.

"Being an Ojibway woman, putting myself out there for education and awareness is important to me," she said.

The quill boxes will be on display at Coolearth Architecture (386 Pacific Ave.) from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. Pawis will be in attendance at the design festival's opening reception Jan. 18 from 7 to 10 p.m.

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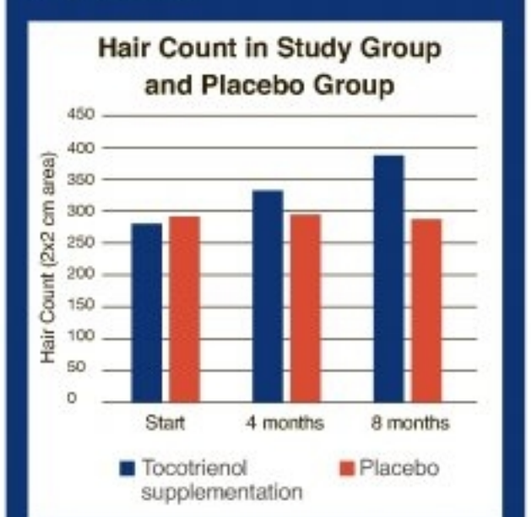
STUDY RESULT:

Researchers studied an area of the scalp equal to 2x2 cm and counted the hairs at the beginning of the study, at 4 months and at 8 months. At the end of the study, the participants on the tocotrienol supplement had gained 34.5% more hair or an increase in average hair count from 285 to 383 hairs. Most of the group showed increases of 10-25%, but 40% of the group had more than 50% increase in hair growth. And only one person did not have any results.



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*Tropical Life Sciences Research 2010 "Effects of Tocotrienol Supplementation on Hair Growth in Human Volunteers" Beoy, Woei et Hay, University Sains Malaysia. To make sure this product is right for you, always read the label and follow the instructions.

‘Unsung hero’ in labour rights faces deportation

IMMIGRATION

Migrant worker and advocate out of options

Gina Bahiwal speaks before a parliamentary committee last year that led to changing rules. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A migrant worker who has stood up for fellow workers and become a public face of the labour rights movement is facing deportation herself, caught up in the very rules she fought successfully to change.

Gina Bahiwal, 42, has run out of options and is scheduled for deportation to the Philippines on Sunday. She was left without status under the former Tory government’s now rescinded “four-in-four-out” rules that banned migrant workers from Canada for four years after having worked here for four.

“I have been inspired by Gina’s dedication and tenacity to fight for the rights of migrant workers. From advocating for their maternal rights to exposing the unscrupulous practices of migrant recruiters, Gina is one of our unsung heroes,” said Chris Ramsaroop of the advocacy group Justicia for Migrant Workers.

Bahiwal, who has a university degree and worked as a social worker in the Philippines, came to Canada in 2008 under the temporary foreign worker program and worked in Ontario and British Columbia in vegetable packing on farms, hotel housekeeping and at a McDonald’s.

She said she paid a Canadian recruiter $5,000 to find her a job in Leamington, Ont., packing tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers but found herself unemployed when she refused to pay another $2,200 to the recruiter to renew her work permit. She later found another job at a different farm.

In 2012, when the Conservative government introduced the four-year ban on migrant workers, Bahiwal knew her days in Canada were numbered and decided to find another job that could potentially offer her a path to permanent residency here.

Bahiwal said she paid another recruiter $1,500 for a job as a housekeeper in B.C. She said she left after two years because she stood up for another migrant worker over her firing and the employer allegedly refused to sponsor Bahiwal’s immigration.

Later she found a job at a McDonald’s in Hope, B.C., and applied for permanent status in Canada under the provincial nominee program. However, her earnings did not meet the government’s income eligibility threshold.

Although the Liberal government recently rescinded the four-in-four-out rules after a parliamentary review of the temporary foreign worker program, Bahiwal’s work permit expired in October 2015 under the old regulations.

“Gina’s case is different from other cases because of her advocacy work. She is the spokesperson for this vulnerable group,” Bahiwal’s lawyer, Richard Wazana, said. “We are hoping immigration officials will recognize that and allow Gina to remain in Canada.”

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

FIRST NATIONS

Girls’ suicides shows need for action: Chief

The deaths of two 12-year-old girls from a remote First Nation in northern Ontario are further evidence of the need for a national suicide strategy to help protect children across Canada, a prominent indigenous leader says.

One of the girls was found dead Sunday and the second one Tuesday in Wapekeka First Nation, an isolated community of about 360 people. The community is focused on ensuring there is enough support in place to stabilize the situation, said Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. A number of young people that have been identified as high-risk were flown out of the community, and there’s reason to believe others may be at risk, Fiddler said.

“I did request the police to monitor the social media activity of these children and youth to try and detect if there is a pattern,” he said.

In December, Fiddler called an emergency meeting with federal cabinet ministers and Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde, where he made a direct link between suicide and the prevalence of childhood sexual abuse in indigenous communities. THE CANADIAN PRESS

No ‘quid pro quo’ with Russia, Canada says

Canada is rebuffing the Kremlin’s thinly veiled overtures that it might be willing to lift a travel ban on new Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland if it eases sanctions on Russia.

Joseph Pickerill, Freeland’s spokesman, says Canada isn’t interested in any bargaining on the subject.

“There is no quid pro quo for aggression and illegal action on their part,” Pickerill said.

The Russian news agency Sputnik reported Wednesday that the country wanted to improve relations with Canada and end the diplomatic fight. Sputnik reported that a source told reporters, “We are ready to co-operate with Canada in all directions, improve relations and end the sanctions war. But we did not start it.” THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Russian report explained

Here's what you need to know about the explosive allegations

President-elect Donald Trump held a news conference in response to a shocking new wave of allegations that Russia collected information that could be used to compromise him. The allegations run from the time before Trump entered the political stage, when he developed business interests in Russia up to the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

WHAT ARE THE ALLEGATIONS?

The allegations are that Russia has collected compromising sex videos and personal information about President-elect Donald Trump. The allegations centre around memos delivered to Trump and out-going U.S. President Barack Obama last week by intelligence chiefs.

The memos suggest that for many years the Russian government has looked for ways to influence Trump. The memos describe videos involving prostitutes with Trump in a 2013 visit to a Moscow hotel. The videos were supposedly prepared as "kompromat," or compromising material, with the possible goal of blackmailing Trump. The memos also suggest that Russian officials proposed various lucrative deals, essentially as disguised bribes in order to win influence over the real estate magnate.

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump holds a press conference Wednesday. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

ARE THE ALLEGATIONS PROVEN?

No.

TRUMP'S REACTION?

On Tuesday night, Trump responded on Twitter: "FAKE NEWS — A TOTAL POLITICAL WITCH HUNT!" A spokesperson for the Russian government also categorically denied the allegations as totally false.

WHAT ARE ALLEGATIONS BASED UPON?

The memos were generated by political operatives seeking to derail Trump's candidacy. The summary of the memos was presented as an appendix to the intelligence agencies' report on Russian hacking efforts, sources told The New York Times.

WHO DREW UP ALLEGATIONS?

The memos were prepared mainly by a retired British intelligence operative for a Washington political and corporate research firm. The firm was paid for its work first by Trump's Republican rivals and later by supporters of Hillary Clinton.

WHEN DID TRUMP HEAR THEM?

Obama and Trump were presented with a summary of the unsubstantiated reports last week by the chiefs of the U.S. intelligence agencies, The Times reports.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Trump concedes role of Russians

In a combative and freewheeling news conference, President-elect Donald Trump said for the first time Wednesday that he accepts Russia was behind the election year hacking of Democrats that roiled the White House race. Looking ahead, he urged Congress to move quickly to replace President Barack Obama's signature health care law and insisted anew that Mexico will pay the cost of a border wall.

The hour-long spectacle in the marbled lobby of Trump's Manhattan skyscraper was his first news conference since winning the election in early November, and the famously unconventional politician demonstrated he had not been changed by the weight of his victory.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

POLISH FOREIGN MINISTER

Nation that wasn't there

The Polish foreign minister has been mocked on Twitter for saying he had a meeting with the representative of a nonexistent country as part of Poland's bid for a seat on the U.N. Security Council.

Witold Waszczykowski was in New York this week to lobby for a seat on the council from 2018-19. He told reporters while there on Tuesday that he had meetings with officials from nearly 20 countries, including some Caribbean nations "for the first time in the history of our diplomacy. For example with countries such as Belize or San Escobar."

There is no country called San Escobar. Waszczykowski explained Wednesday that it was just a slip of the tongue made while he was tired and that he had in mind Saint Kitts and Nevis, a two-island Caribbean country known in Spanish as San Cristobal y Nieves.

"Unfortunately after 22 hours in planes and several connecting flights you can make a slip of the tongue," Waszczykowski said.

That hasn't stopped an eruption of jokes under the hashtag #SanEscobar, including an invented flag and a slew of fake news. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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BOB HEPBURN ON KEVIN O'LEARY

Because he isn't an official candidate yet, the celebrity entrepreneur is not required to state where he stands. Still, there are key questions for him to answer.

Kevin O'Leary is a real tease, isn't he?

For more than a year, the multimillionaire entrepreneur has been tossing out hints that he will run for the federal Conservative leadership, a move that has many party loyalists salivating.

Over that time, O'Leary, who became a national celebrity as a panelist on the CBC-TV program Dragon's Den, has met with dozens of federal MPs, has launched his own campaign-style website, O'Leary for Canada, has posted videos on his Facebook page denouncing Justin Trudeau and has created an exploratory committee with high-profile Tories, such as former Ontario premier Mike Harris. The list goes on.

But at times O'Leary has inexplicably pulled back, suggesting variously that the timing isn't quite right, or that the field of candidates is too crowded right now or that he needs a better sense of the true mood of party members.

It's enough to break the heart of any Conservative desperate to defeat Trudeau in the 2019 election and who looks with despair at the 14 candidates already in the Tory race.

O'Leary can continue to tease his fans until Feb. 24, the last day for leadership hopefuls to officially declare their candidacy.

The Conservatives tarred Michael Ignatieff with the 'Just Visiting' tag. Will O'Leary, who has said 'Boston is home,' also be 'just visiting'?

Because he isn't an official candidate yet, O'Leary is not required to state where he stands on any issue. Still, there are key questions for him to answer if and when he does enter the race. They include:

First, will you run in the 2019 election even if you lose the leadership race?

Given the timeline of when he must enter the race (Feb. 24) and when the leadership votes will be announced (May 27), O'Leary may well be a politician for barely three months. If he loses, he could easily slink back to Boston where he lives, having invested little time or money. Even if he wins the leadership, O'Leary could quit politics within three years if the Liberals are re-elected.

Celebrity businessman Kevin O'Leary speaks during a session entitled "If I run here's how I'd do it" during a conference in Ottawa in February 2016. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Second, will you sell or put your businesses in a blind trust if you win the leadership?

O'Leary has a slew of various companies, including the O'Leary Financial Group, O'Leary Ventures, O'Leary Fine Wines, and others. To avoid potential conflicts of interest, many rich political leaders, including president-elect Donald Trump, have taken steps to insure they are squeaky clean in this area.

Third, will you move full-time to Canada rather than continue to split your time between here and Boston, where you have lived since the mid-1990s, if you win the leadership?

While O'Leary owns property in Toronto, he told Boston Magazine in 2013 that "Boston is home." It was the Conservatives who tarred former Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff with the "Just Visiting" tag when he came back to Canada after decades of living abroad to enter federal politics. Will O'Leary also be "just visiting"?

Fourth, will you release a full set of policy proposals during the leadership campaign?

So far O'Leary has spent much of his time bashing the Liberals over the economy and barely touching on any other issue, such as the Middle East, environment or social policy, such as assisted suicide.

Fifth, will you pledge to learn French even if you lose the leadership race?

Last year O'Leary, who doesn't speak French, casually dismissed the notion that a federal party leader should be bilingual. Now, though, he's reportedly hired a private French tutor and says he is "going to try" to learn the language.

If O'Leary does enter the leadership race, he may stand the best chance of winning.

The reasons are obvious: a weak slate of opponents, his huge name recognition and his Trump-style tough-talking image that appeals to many voters. An indication of the size of O'Leary's following is the fact that his latest Facebook video, in which he attacked Trudeau on the economy, was viewed more than 144,000 times in the first 48 hours after it was posted.

Fact-checkers had a field day with that seven-minute video. Among the statements noted was one where he said Trudeau's cabinet "are all ex-Ontarioites under Dalton McGuinty." In fact, only 11 of 31 ministers are from Ontario and not one was a provincial MPP. Also, he said Canada's population is 34 million, when it is actually more than 36 million.

With six weeks to go before the deadline to enter the race, O'Leary has lots of time to craft replies to the key questions. His answers should reveal much about just how serious he is about being a full-time politician.

Bob Hepburn is a columnist for the Toronto Star.

VICKY MOCHAMA

Status of Women should not be where ministers go to rot

Justin Trudeau announced a reshuffle in the cabinet which included a reassignment for Maryam Monsef to the Ministry for the Status of Women. Several have described the move as a demotion. It's considered thus because the office doesn't have the power, prestige or budget of other government departments.

Yet the characterization rings hollow.

For Monsef, it's a lateral move. Let's not pretend that in her former post as minister for democratic institutions she was in any way central to conversations about war or taxes. On her biggest file — electoral reform — she seemed earnest but indecisive. That is if we're being generous.

That Status of Women is considered a step down tells us a lot about the actual status of women in Canada in 2016.

This new position actually gives her a slightly more robust portfolio with working relationships across the cabinet, such as with Justice and Indigenous Affairs, on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women inquiry. She is now in charge of a department with a dedicated staff, a budget and a wide-ranging brief.

From a thinly funded portfolio and the unfortunate task of exciting the populace about proportional representation, she now has far more power to compel policy.

Take, for example, gender-based analysis.

Since signing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, the federal government has promised to implement gender-based analysis on all policy decisions. Last year, the auditor general revealed the practice has been inconsistent. Of 25 departments, six did not have a framework for gender-based analysis. The rest had partial or incomplete plans.

For two decades then (and counting), there has been a measurably incomplete commitment to looking at how policy impacts the lives of men and women. At present, our national picture of gender and policy is patchwork. This is where Status of Women steps in.

The mandate letter requires the minister to work the Privy Council Office to "ensure that a gender-based analysis is applied to proposals before they arrive at Cabinet for decision-making." With an additional $3 million in the ministry's coffers from the latest budget, there is now financial room for the incoming minister to make gender-based analysis a priority. From a doomed portfolio, she is now more than equipped to tackle the challenges at Status of Women.

Monsef's track record as minister of democratic institutions should, however, give the 50 per cent of women in the country pause. Despite the testimony of 200 experts and conversations with citizens who joined her as she toured the country, electoral reform is all but dead.

Her new job is not a demotion but it may yet prove an exercise in failing upwards.

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Thursday, January 12, 2017

"Instead of watching the scale, we could be working towards becoming president or prime minister."

Read more on Natasha Stoynoff's new book and her dealings with Donald Trump at **metronews.ca**

Metro's WOMEN'S MARCH SURVIVAL GUIDE

Tens of thousands of people are heading to the U.S. capital on Jan. 21 for the Women's March on Washington. Hundreds of cities are holding similar events in solidarity. Many will be attending a political rally for the very first time . **Genna Buck** asked the pros what you need to know.

Next week, the United States will be swearing in a president who has called women "dogs" and "fat pigs," made fun of menstruation and bragged about sexual assault. The day after Donald Trump's inauguration, women will be descending on Washington D.C. to express their displeasure. But what do you pack for a march? What's the etiquette? We asked for tips from Tori Cress, a veteran indigenous political organizer in the Idle No More movement, and Marissa McTasney, who is organizing bus trips to D.C. from Canada. Here's their best advice, in a handy format you can stick on the back of a sign.

A ROUGH GUIDE TO PROTEST

Tori Cress is a seasoned pro at political action. If you are attending a march next Saturday, here's her best advice:

KEEP UP TO DATE
Any last-minute changes are usually posted on whatever website or social media service the group is using to get organized, so check it often.

STAY OUT OF TROUBLE
Be aware of hangers-on around the sides of a march route, saying hateful things and trying to provoke a reaction and get you off-message. "Don't engage," Cress said.

RESPECTFULLY COEXIST
There are going to be large gatherings with many different groups with various agendas. "I usually just stick with my own crowd," Cress said. "We do all have our own issues, and they're all important. You don't want to try to make your issue more important. It's all white supremacy and patriarchy that we're fighting. It affects us in different ways."

FOLLOW THE LEADER
Stick to the route that's been planned, and if there's a designated person in your group who communicates with the local authorities or police, leave them to do it. "Trying to take the lead and step over organizers is a common mistake that new people make," Cress said.

PACKING AND PREPPING

DON'T FORGET THIS STUFF — A CHECKLIST

- **Dress for the weather** In January, Washington D.C. is usually between -2 and 6 C and damp, so you'll need warm layers and winter boots you can walk in. Check the forecast to see if you need an umbrella, Cress said. McTasney recommends disposable hand warmers.
- **Have a smooth border crossing** Whether you're travelling by land or air, find out what you're allowed to take to the U.S. Have all your medications, passport, and travel documents in a safe and accessible place, like a zippered bag in your carry-on. You don't want to hold up your whole bus at the border, McTasney said.
- **Be comfy on the journey** The drive to D.C. could be 10 hours or more, depending on where you're coming from. So pack slippers, a blanket, a neck pillow and something to read, McTasney said.
- **Stock up on snacks and a water bottle** Choose things with protein to keep your energy up. Cress suggests granola bars, nuts, and jerky.
- **Phone, charger, and back-up battery:** Facebook Live is an increasingly popular way to broadcast in real-time. If you want to be able to stream at a moment's notice, it's a "no brainer" to make sure your technology is up to the job, Cress said. (Don't forget a data plan.)
- **WHAT NOT TO BRING** Avoid anything that could be interpreted as a weapon, Cress advised. Also, many items, including selfie sticks, large protest signs and backpacks bigger than 45x33x18 cm are banned from the actual inauguration ceremony.

Q&A

'Look at her, I don't think so'

How Natasha Stoynoff's body image book project helped her through a fresh attack from Donald Trump

Canadian journalist Natasha Stoynoff has worked for People Magazine and the Toronto Star. Her latest project is Curvy and Confident, a Chicken Soup for the Soul book that collects women's personal stories about finding body confidence.

If her name sounds familiar, that's because she's the same People magazine reporter who, in October, publicly stated that Donald Trump assaulted her in 2005. We asked her about the book and how she's feeling as her alleged assailant is about to be sworn in as president.

What made a story stand out and make you know it needed to be included in the book?
There were so many great submissions. I felt so personally connected to them all. So many were starting out with struggle and pain. And then you really realize how much women punish themselves and hate their bodies. No matter what shape or size. We have to do something about it. So many stories ... illustrated the theme that so many women don't live moments of their lives, because they're covering their bodies. You don't go to a function because you don't have the right dress. You don't go to the beach or wear a bathing suit.

I can't help but notice the dissonance between the message of this book and your experience. Donald Trump responded to your allegations by saying "Look at her, I don't think so".
It was crazy. (The People piece was published) when we were in the last week of the book. I had just gone through all these stories about women baring their souls and being afraid of what people say about how they look.

Then the (Access Hollywood) tape came out, and a couple days later I saw what he said at the debate (that the tape was "locker room talk"). And I was just so upset at what he was saying. Working on the book actually gave me the strength to write about it.

When you're a woman it's a struggle anyway to feel confident about how you look. Like every other woman, I have ups and downs with my level of curviness and my level of confidence. And so it was very jarring to have the president-elect refer to my looks on international television. Strangely, it didn't hurt me too much. I think I'd been strengthened by the book.

Are you angry with the women who elected Trump?
It's complicated. First of all, I think a lot of people may have not believed the women who came forward (and accused Trump of assaulting them). And then the ones who did don't hold that sort of thing as a priority. There's some great saying about a lion being in a cage, and then you take the bars away but they still circle the parameters of the cage. I think (some) women aren't comfortable yet with a woman in power. GENNA BUCK/METRO

The evolution of a teenage queen

INTERVIEW

Victoria was tiny in stature but giant in her courage, force

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

Jenna Coleman stars as the young Queen Victoria in the new series premiering Jan. 15 on PBS, which is based on Daisy Goodwin's take on the monarch's first three years in power. HANDOUT

In 2014, Daisy Goodwin was suffering through what Queen Elizabeth might call an *annus horribilis*. The British author and television producer found herself unemployed after being forced out of her own company, was diagnosed with a treatable form of breast cancer and, to top it all off, her house burned down in a freak accident.

Any one of those events would test a person's mettle, but Goodwin credits another female monarch, Queen Victoria, with getting her through one of the worst times in her life.

"Looking at a woman who had such incredible force and sense of self was rather encouraging," Goodwin says. "What I like about Victoria is that she's a flawed human being, but she has the courage to learn from her mistakes. She inspired me to write and to not indulge in self-pity."

Goodwin first became fascinated with the 19th-century British monarch back when she was a student in the early 1980s and discovered her journals at the Cambridge University library. As it turns out, Queen Victoria was a prolific, lifelong diarist who wrote more than a formidable 62 million words over the course of her life. In particular, Goodwin was struck by Victoria's early journals, which chronicles her crowning as monarch at the age of 18, her infatuation with the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, through the early years of her marriage to her first cousin, Prince Albert, to whom she proposed.

In those volumes, Goodwin discovered a "saucy, frisky, willful" self-possessed young woman, "quite interested in parties and boys and flirting, just like any teenage girl would be."

And so, still inspired 20 years later, and facing major personal obstacles, Goodwin began writing Victoria, a fictionalized take on the first three years of the Queen's reign. Goodwin initially conceived the story as a novel, then switched to a screenplay, which would eventually become the eight-part television series, also called Victoria, which debuts Jan. 15 on PBS.

> **She loved sex. Sex was terribly important to her.**
> Daisy Goodwin

For both the novel and series, Goodwin relied heavily on the journals, but also drew from memories of her own youth, and observations of her teenage daughter, who, like the Queen, is diminutive in stature.

"She's tiny but incredibly powerful as a character," says Goodwin (who wrote herself a cameo in the TV series as Lady Cecilia Buggins.) "I thought about what would happen if I woke up one morning and my daughter was the boss of everyone. It was quite terrifying."

Although the 2009 film The Young Victoria, starring Emily Blunt, was a critical success, the image of the youthful ruler has never really resonated in pop culture like other members of British royalty. Goodwin speculates it's because the historic images of the older woman are so powerful they're impossible to set aside. It's also difficult to imagine that Queen — whose iconic likeness graces park statues with her thick jowls and stern demeanor — as the same sexually open human Goodwin discovered in the diaries.

"She loved sex. Sex was terribly important to her and I think we forget her humanity in the image of her," says Goodwin, who also observed that Victoria never seemed concerned about her physical appearance because she had power. "When you're surrounded by teenagers who spend their whole lives checking how many likes they have on Instagram, it's glorious to write about a woman for whom that is not an issue."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.

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The message is perfect, and sad, and the book is as beautiful as the sentiment it delivers.

This remarkable project brings together some of comics' best talent to make a statement in the aftermath of the mass shooting in Orlando's Pulse nightclub last June, in which 49 people died and 53 were wounded.

The idea is to honour those affected with a creative project that shows positivity amid the tragedy.

It's an anthology book, and the list of those involved is long: Phil Jiminez, Brian Michael bendis, Kieron Gillen, Emma Vicelli, Jim Zub, Ming Doyle and more.

Tribute comics can be hit-and-miss, and sometimes even mawkish, but this one is uplifted and, against all the odds, even fun in places. Paul Dini's contribution, a Harley Quinn and Poison Ivy story, is especially nice.

It's also a celebration of the LGBTQ community, hit so hard by the hate crime, with all proceeds of the book going to victims, survivors and their families through the organization Equality Florida.

BOOK BRIEF

Kendi's historic stamps fresher than ever today

Stamped from the Beginning, winner of the U.S. National Book Award for nonfiction, is a work of history very much rooted in recent events.

Ibram X. Kendi's 600-page narrative traces the origins of racism in the U.S. from colonial times to the present. Kendi began working on the book shortly before the killing of Trayvon Martin in 2012, and he felt a special urgency to write about what he calls "stimulations," individuals "who believe that black people were culturally inferior."

"There are notions that scientists, and journalists can be objective," he says. "And typically those ideas that have connoted that black people are in some ways inferior have been cast as these objective ideas, which then legitimize them and allowed for their circulation.

"This country was created by white men for white men, and inequality between the white and black races was stamped from the beginning."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MUSIC

Junos rename indigenous award

Juno Awards organizers are renaming the aboriginal album of the year category to indigenous music album of the year.

Juno president and CEO Allan Reid says the change acknowledges all First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities in Canada.

He says the move "aims to honour, respect and acknowledge the indigenous peoples of Canada and their long standing contributions to the Canadian music industry."

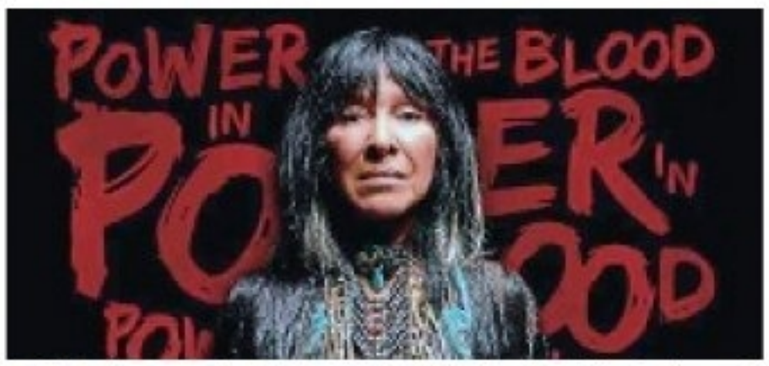
It's not the first time the Junos have changed the category's name.

The Juno award, which was introduced in 1994, was originally titled best music of aboriginal Canada recording. Its name was then changed to aboriginal recording of the year in 2003.

Another small change was made in 2010, which renamed the award to specify it was for aboriginal album of the year.

A committee of Juno organizers suggested the latest change was timely given Canada fully adopted the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People last year. The renamed award will be presented at this year's gala dinner on April 1.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Buffy Sainte-Marie won a Juno in 2016 for aboriginal album of the year, a category that's being renamed. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CELEBS ON INSTA

Drake pays tribute with bizarre Obama mash-up

Drake paid tribute to President Barack Obama by sharing an image from a popular meme of the Canadian rapper's face mixed with the president's.

Drake shared the picture on his Instagram on Tuesday night following Obama's farewell address to the nation. The image shows Obama standing at a podium, but sporting Drake's signature beard and hairdo.

In the caption he wrote, "As a Canadian that calls America home for part of the year I will always carry your words and the memory of your time in office with me as inspiration."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama as Drake. INSTAGRAM

JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Hardwicke stands atop a Trumpian wall of torture

THE SHOW: The Wall, Season 1, Episode 2 (NBC)
THE MOMENT: Losing it

The Wall may be meant to change lives but it leaves people screaming and weeping over lost money. CONTRIBUTED

Katie and Chris are married U.S. military veterans. He's a risk-taker. She's cautious. She's been backstage in a sound-proof room, answering multiple-choice questions. He's been on stage rolling balls down The Wall, a giant pachinko machine. He racked up $1.3 million. Then he lost it all.

Katie doesn't know this. So did she sign a contract that guarantees her some cash (in her case, $115,000)? Or did she tear it up in hopes of a bigger payout?

Host Chris Hardwicke (@Midnight) asks Katie to stand before Chris and explain her decision. "I was so nervous," she says. "Should I bet on us and all the dreams we had for this money? We could start our family on the right track." She pauses. "I didn't sign it."

Chris tells her, "We're left with nothing." Their eyes fill.

"You're left with zero dollars, but you're not left with nothing," Hardwicke jumps in. "You still have each other."

This is supposed to be fun? You're watching people scream for money, or weep over losing it. It's unpleasant either way.

"The Wall is meant to change lives," Hardwicke keeps saying. But try as they might to be inspirational, the three episodes I've seen feel instead like a metaphor for Trump's America: "We have the one thing everyone needs, money. We're going to hold it under your nose, so you can smell it. Then we, like life, are arbitrarily going to thrill you, or snap you like a twig."

It should be called The Wall of Torture.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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For full contest rules visit: thestar.com/shortstory

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Project overview

Musée is set amidst a tree-lined pocket off Adelaide Street West. Construction is almost complete on this 21-storey building with ground-floor retail, with occupancy starting this month. The new community is located between vibrant King Street West and eclectic Queen Street West.

Housing amenities

Amenities include a recreation facility with a fully-equipped gymnasium, a 17th floor outdoor terrace and outdoor swimming pool. There's also a theatre, three guest suites, a meeting room and 24-hour concierge service.

Location and transit

Musée is situated on Adelaide just east of Bathurst Street in the heart of the Fashion District. Your choice of Bathurst TTC buses, nearby King and Queen streetcars, bike lanes or a quick drive to the Gardiner Expressway.

In the neighbourhood

The area offers many lifestyle choices, with a variety of upscale restaurants, outdoor patios, lounges, and dance clubs. The site features a park with direct access to King Street through a mews-style walkway.

DUNCAN MCALLISTER/FOR METRO

NEED TO KNOW

What: Musée
Builder: Plaza
Architect: Quadrangle Architects Ltd.
Interiors: Bryon Patton and Associates
Location: 525 Adelaide St. W. near Bathurst
Sizes: 1,076 sq. ft.
Pricing: $659,000
Suites: A collection of condominium suites
Status: Currently selling
Sales Centre: 525 Adelaide St. W.
Hours: Monday to Thursday from 12 to 6 p.m. Weekends from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
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Website: pureplaza.com

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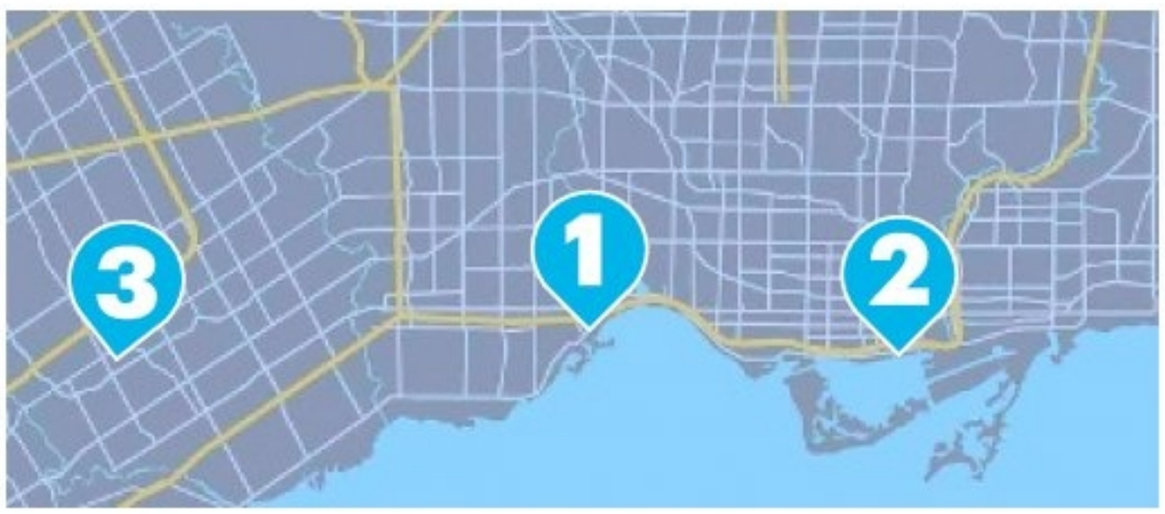
2 MOVE-IN READY

Queens Quay: Lakefront suites and townhomes are available at the Residences at Pier 27, located at 29 and 39 Queens Quay E. Contact the sales office for a private viewing. Contact: 416-367-3456, P27condos.com

3 UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Mississauga: Pinnacle's Grand Park 2 condominiums in Mississauga has a collection of penthouse suites available. Visit the presentation centre at 3995 Grand Park Dr. at Burnhamthorpe Rd. Contact: 905-276-3981, PinnacleInternational.com

DUNCAN MCALLISTER/FOR METRO



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metro SPORTS

Johnny Manziel will be in Houston ahead of the Super Bowl to give fans a chance to take a pic at a price: $50 per selfie and $99 for pro portraits

Canadian talent to make presence felt in MLS draft

SOCCER

Projections have trio of Canucks going in first round

Kwame Awuah has dreamed of being a professional soccer player for just about as long as he can remember.

Today, he's part of the largest Canadian contingent ever invited to Major League Soccer's combine in Los Angeles, leading up to Friday's SuperDraft.

Kwame Awuah ANDY MEAD/MLS

"It didn't become clear that (going pro) was possible until I was about 13, after I participated in (local academy) Sigma FC's annual Sigma Camps during the summer, where European coaches do a couple sessions with the team all week long," Awuah, a Toronto-raised midfielder, said via email before the five-day prospects camp.

Local academy coaches and the sport's national governing body say this year's Canadian crop — also featuring Edmonton-born midfielder Shamit Shome, plus strikers Brian Wright (Ajax), Adonijah Reid and Chris Nanco (both from Brampton) — is just the beginning, paving the way for more to reach the pro level.

Mock drafts regularly project Shome, Reid and Wright to go among the 22 first-round picks on Friday, which would be a Canadian high. This comes on the heels of strong showings by Canadians over the last two drafts:

- In 2015, Brampton native — and fellow Sigma FC alum — Cyle Larin became the first Canadian to go No. 1 overall (to Orlando City), while Pickering defender Skylar Thomas went 11th to Toronto FC.
- Last year, another Sigma product, Toronto's Richie Laryea, was selected seventh by Orlando City.

Wright says he started to take a keener interest in MLS when players he had played with or against started popping up — Larin, Thomas and Toronto FC midfielder Jay Chapman.

"It's just really cool to see those guys get the opportunity to go professional," he said.

Another significant factor is Generation Adidas Canada, a program brought in this past year by MLS to develop Canadian talent. Shome and Reid became eligible through that route.

Bobby Smyrniotis, Sigma FC's founder and technical director, echoes what Wright's saying about success breeding success and the impact of seeing familiar faces reach the pros.

Brampton's Adonijah Reid, right, was one of five Canadians invited to the MLS Combine ahead of Friday's SuperDraft. ANDY MEAD/MLS

"It gives our players the ability to always dream and hope that they can be the next ones," Smyrniotis says. "It's an immediate thing. It's something they can touch."

Hopefully, Smyrniotis adds, that continued development will help the men's national team — currently ranked 117th in the world. Half of the players at the most recent men's camp were under the age of 24.

Tony Fonseca, the Canadian Soccer Association's technical director, sees that happening, but it will take time, he says.

"We are in a transition phase with players now leaving the Canadian men's national team due to different goals moving forward," says Fonseca, "but ... I'm very, very encouraged to say the future is bright."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Leafs have two more all-stars down on the farm

In a season in which the Maple Leafs' youth movement appears to have been worth the wait, it's worth noting the organization has two other youngsters — beyond Auston Matthews — heading to an all-star game.

Toronto Marlies forwards Kasperi Kapanen and Brendan Leipsic are heading to the American Hockey League's extravaganza on Jan. 29 in Lehigh Valley, Pa.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Boatmen sign kicker Hajrullahu to extension

The Toronto Argonauts signed Canadian kicker Lirim Hajrullahu to a contract extension Wednesday.

The five-foot-11, 205-pound native of St. Catharines, Ont., was scheduled to become a free agent next month.

Hajrullahu made 37 of 42 field goals (a career-best 88.1 per cent) in his first season with Toronto last year, making 15 straight at one point.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Manchester City faces anti-doping violation

The English Football Association has charged Manchester City with breaching anti-doping rules.

The FA says Pep Guardiola's team failed to ensure that information about players' whereabouts was accurate. City has been given until Jan. 19 to respond to the charge.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Southampton takes first leg over Liverpool in semis

Liverpool endured more cup frustration when Southampton won the first leg of their League Cup semifinal 1-0 on Wednesday.

Nathan Redmond capitalized on a mistake by Ragnar Klavan to score the only goal in the 20th minute and Southampton could rue not building a stronger lead to take to Anfield in two weeks' time. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BASKETBALL

Ice Cube, Iverson back 3-on-3 league

Ice Cube and Allen Iverson are putting their star power behind a new 3-on-3 professional basketball league.

The entertainment mogul and NBA Hall of Famer announced the launch of Big3 on Wednesday morning at a news conference.

Allen Iverson MICHAEL LOCCISANO/GETTY IMAGES

Teams comprised of former NBA stars will play its eight-game season in the summer starting June 24 with each week's contests taking place in a different city with all eight teams playing each Saturday. It will finish with a two-week playoffs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Habs top Jets in goal fest

Phillip Danault and Artturi Lehkonen each scored twice as the Montreal Canadiens dominated the Winnipeg Jets in a 7-4 victory on Wednesday.

Al Montoya, playing against his former team, made 22 saves for the Canadiens (26-10-6).

Connor Hellebuyck allowed three goals on seven shots in his sixth straight start before being replaced by Michael Hutchinson late in the first period. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Ovechkin reaches 1,000-point plateau

Alex Ovechkin didn't wait long to hit another milestone in his illustrious career, becoming the 84th player in NHL history to record 1,000 points.

The Washington Capitals captain scored 35 seconds into the game Wednesday against Sidney Crosby and the rival Pittsburgh Penguins. Ovechkin became the fourth Russian-born player to reach 1,000 and the 37th to do it all with one franchise.

Reaching the milestone in his 880th game, Ovechkin is the second-fastest active player to reach 1,000 after Jaromir Jagr, who did it in 763 games.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

545

Ovechkin's first-period goal on Wednesday was the 545th of his career. Go to metronews.ca for the game's result.

Canadian Doctor stands on guard for K.C. Chiefs

NFL PLAYOFFS

Duvernay-Tardif a vital player for AFC West champs

It's been a meteoric rise for Canadian Laurent Duvernay-Tardif.

Taken in the sixth round, 200th overall, of the 2014 NFL draft from McGill University, the 25-year-old native of Mont-St-Hilaire, Que., has established himself as the Kansas City Chiefs' starting right guard. And he's done it while also continuing to study medicine at McGill.

"If you would have asked me after I got drafted where I'd be in three years, I don't know if I would have been that confident to say I'd be a starter and doing decently," a modest Duvernay-Tardif said last week.

"But at the same time I quickly realized if you want to stick in the NFL you have to become an essential part of the team after your second or third year, otherwise they're going to find somebody to replace you.

"There's no other way to stick in the NFL. You've got to show you can perform and be an important part of an offensive line or team."

Duvernay-Tardif, a converted defensive lineman, made the Chiefs' 53-man roster as a rookie but didn't play. Dubbed "Canadian Doctor" and "Larry" by his teammates, Duvernay-Tardif became a starter in 2015, playing 13 games before making a career-best 14 starts this year — playing every game he dressed for.

After earning a 2015 wild-card post-season berth with an 11-5 record, the Chiefs finished atop the AFC West at 12-4.

That secured Kansas City the second seed in the AFC playoffs and home-field advantage for a divisional-round matchup against the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday.

Duvernay-Tardif's transition to the American game wasn't a seamless one. He had to adjust to a new position (guard from tackle) and game (four downs instead of three) while facing bigger, stronger and faster players lining up right across from him instead of a yard off the ball.

"McGill has a great program and I learned a lot there but when I got to the NFL, it was totally different," Duvernay-Tardif said. "With no yard between you and the defensive line ... it changes the way you play a little bit.

"The first couple of weeks at my first training camp, I wasn't even able to see the linebacker blitz because they were that fast. It was really an adjustment but at the same time you're always looking for challenges and coach (Andy) Reid and (offensive line coach Andy Heck) took the time to help me ... I'm very grateful for that."

Duvernay-Tardif hasn't enjoyed the luxury of relaxing after the NFL season as he's spent the last two off-seasons juggling workouts with medical school commitments. While that makes for a very hectic schedule, Duvernay-Tardif remains intent on seeing his academic requirements through.

"I promised myself when I decided to go down this road I'd finish my degree," he said. "We all know careers are so short in the NFL and sport in general and I want to prepare myself for after my (football) career because you don't know how long it's going to last."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chiefs right guard Laurent Duvernay-Tardif has spent the last two off-seasons juggling workouts with medical school commitments. SEAN M. HAFFEY/GETTY IMAGES

> **It was really an adjustment but at the same time you're always looking for challenges.**
> Laurent Duvernay-Tardif on American football

AWARD

Duvernay-Tardif won the J.P. Metras Trophy as the most outstanding lineman while playing for McGill in 2013.

IN BRIEF

Broncos decide not to pass up Joseph again

A runner-up two years ago, Vance Joseph is John Elway's pick this time around.

"It's official. Excited to announce Vance Joseph as head coach of the Denver Broncos!" Elway tweeted early Wednesday afternoon.

Joseph impressed Elway in 2015 when Gary Kubiak got the job. Kubiak, 55, stepped down last week over health concerns.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cowboys' Elliot not injured after minor car crash

Star Dallas Cowboys running back Ezekiel Elliott was involved in a minor vehicle accident not far from the team's practice facility Wednesday. The rookie didn't miss practice and said he wasn't injured.

Frisco police said there were no injuries in the accident at an intersection about a mile from Cowboys headquarters in the suburb about 30 miles north of Dallas. Elliott wouldn't discuss details of the crash, saying "I'm fine, it's like nothing happened.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

McDermott named new head coach of Buffalo

The Buffalo Bills have named former Carolina Panthers defensive co-ordinator Sean McDermott as their head coach to fix their under-performing defence and restore relevance to a franchise that hasn't reached the playoffs since the Music City Miracle loss in January 2000. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Ready in 20 minutes
Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- kosher salt
- pepper
- 1/2 cup diced red onion
- about 12 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 cup diced cucumber
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil, plus more for garnish
- 1 1/2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 large, ripe avocadoes, diced
- 2 tsps olive oil

Directions

1. Place chicken between two pieces of plastic wrap or inside a plastic bag; pound to 1/4-inch thick using a mallet or rolling pin. Season with salt and pepper.

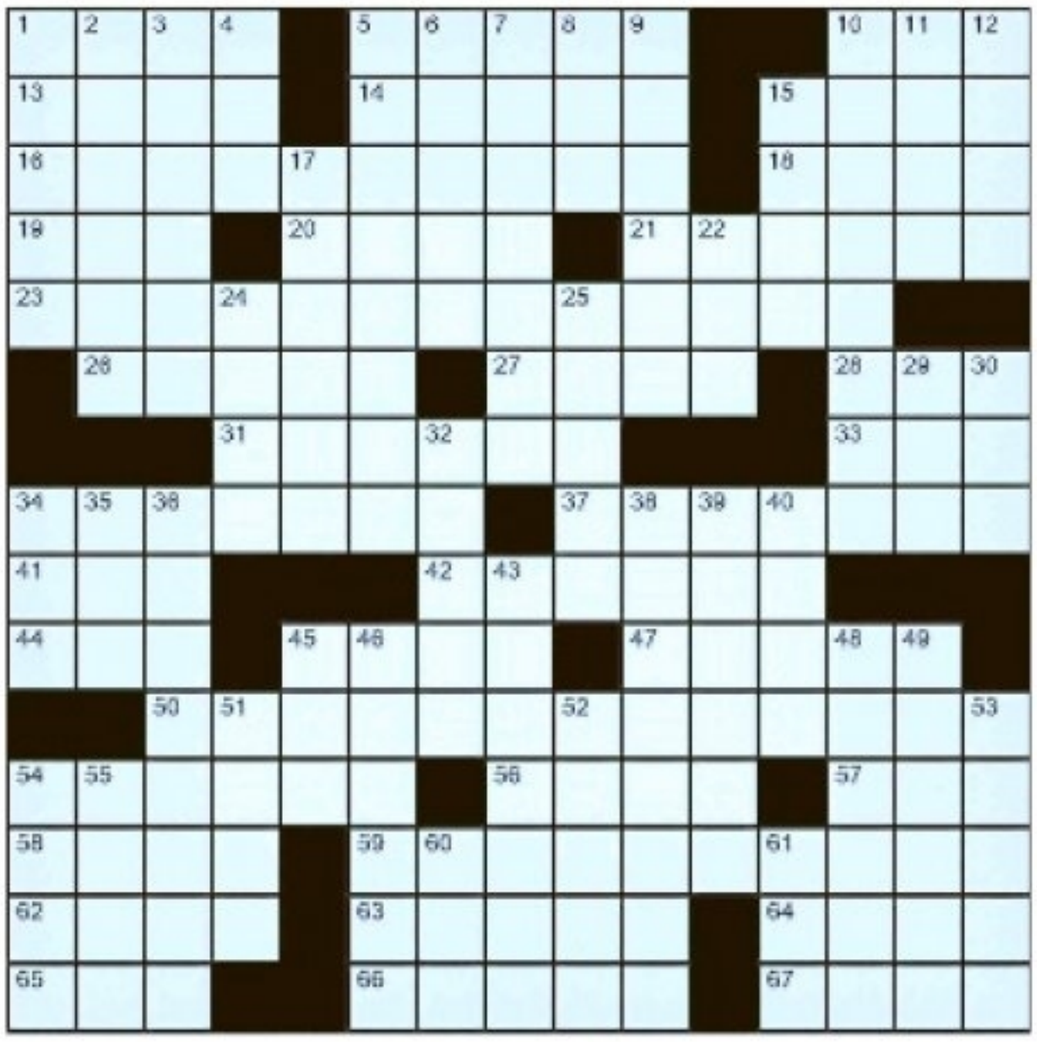
2. In large bowl, toss onion, tomatoes, cucumber, basil, lemon juice and salt. Gently mix in avocado.

3. Lightly oil grill grate or grill pan with oil-soaked towel. Grill chicken, turning once, until cooked through and grill marks appear, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a clean platter. (Or you can cook your chicken in a large cast iron skillet over medium heat. Warm 1 tsp oil and add two chicken breasts and cook 4 minutes on each side. Repeat with the last two breasts.)

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Post-Winters times [abbr.]
5. Appointed
10. Metric units, e.g.
13. "Able was I __ saw Elba."
14. Ms. Donovan of "Clueless" (1995)
15. Fearsome reptile, commonly
16. One saying "It's now 2pm ...and now it's 3:12pm ...7:23pm now...": 2 wds.
18. American chat host Kelly
19. Apricot-like Japanese fruit
20. Prefix to 'ology' (Study of the eye's iris in alternative medicine)
21. Rinsed, as with a solvent
23. Honour in 1995 for author Carol Shields for The Stone Diaries: 2 wds.
26. Buying-stuff place
27. __ River, of New York City
28. Hosiery glitch
31. Planets
33. 'Advert' suffix
34. Language spoken in Spain
37. Jewelled as Duchess Kate at a formally posh function
41. Princess Eugenie's sis
42. Schedule
44. Shortened sandwich
45. Pinnacle
47. Sub instrument
50. Canadian ballet legend who is an Officer of the Order of Canada: 2 wds.
54. "Makes sense to me now.": 3 wds.
56. Noon: French
57. Court
58. Rapper, Flo __
59. Astronauts' apparel: 2 wds.
62. Mr. Philbin, et al.
63. Printer need
64. Take off
65. Compass pt.
66. Soothsayers
67. Alberta town

DOWN
1. Get tables, chairs, etc. ready at the reception: 2 wds.
2. Canadian telecommunications provider
3. Make more cheese gooey again
4. "Sprechen __ Deutsch?"
5. Pretty close to being freezing: 2 wds.
6. "Kate & __"
7. "__ Pierce" (1945) starring Joan Crawford
8. WNW's opposite
9. Challengers
10. Standards/guidelines
11. Sulk
12. Carangid fish
15. Penelope of pictures
17. Lemon, in Longueuil
22. Sch. course, English __.
24. Cedar Rapids locale
25. Tomato __ (Pantry item)
29. Operate
30. "Waking __ Devine" (1998)
32. Cud-chewing creature
34. Fred __ (Cabaret lyricist)
35. Salt, in Montreal
36. Reality star Audrina
38. Those in the know about unknown information
39. Handsome fellow of ancient Greek mythology
40. Phoned
43. Relevant
45. Wood chopper
46. Treasure boxes
48. Freely/whenever you choose: 2 wds.
49. Entrenched
51. Those, in Spain
52. Kitchen gadget for potatoes despite its name
53. Sniffers
54. Hockey star Bobby's kin
55. Gets the horse going!
60. Edgar Allan's surname
61. Sci-Fi ride

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
A secret love affair might take you over the moon today. Yes, you might be swept away by the romance of it all! Others will be involved in pleasant secrets.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You feel tenderhearted and supportive toward a friend today. In fact, some of you will feel so cozy with a friend that he or she could become a lover!

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Someone might ask for your creative input on something today. Meanwhile, some of you will strike up a new romance with your boss or someone in a position of authority.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Because your appreciation of beauty is heightened today, let yourself enjoy beautiful places like parks, art galleries, museums and gorgeous buildings. It will please you.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
In discussions about how to divide or share something today, you feel generous toward others. This is good; nevertheless, don't give away the farm.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Relations with partners and close friends are warm and friendly today. That's because you feel mutually sympathetic and understanding. Gosh.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Someone might ask for your advice at work today. There's no doubt that you will feel sympathetic to co-workers. You also will enjoy a chance to make your workspace look more attractive.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This is the kind of day where love at first sight might happen for some of you. You feel starry-eyed, vulnerable and ready for romance.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Family discussions will go well today, because family members are sympathetic to each other. You also will enjoy redecorating or making your home look more beautiful.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You feel kindhearted to others today, especially siblings and neighbors. Meanwhile, many of you can make money from your words.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If shopping today, you will be tempted to be extravagant because it will be tough to resist elegance and luxury. Oh yes! That's why they call it luxury — and of course, it is irresistible!

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Today you feel very tuned in to the world, which is why you are sympathetic and open to everyone. You are very aware that kindness is important.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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				8		6		4
		5					1	
3								9
	8			5			6	
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	1					9		
2		9		1				
	6		2		4			

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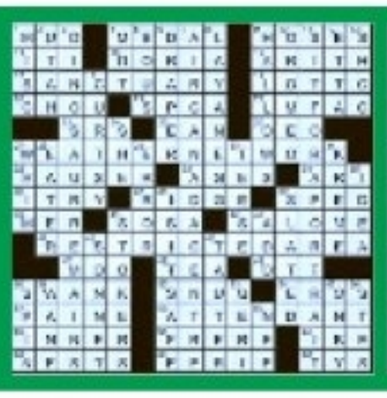

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9	7	6	8	5	4	3	2	1
2	8	5	3	9	1	6	7	4
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6	9	8	5	4	7	1	3	2
3	2	7	1	6	8	4	9	5
8	6	2	4	1	3	9	5	7
5	3	4	7	8	9	2	1	6
7	1	9	6	2	5	8	4	3

ALL-IN LEASE | 2017 COROLLA CE MANUAL

$35† at 0.99% apr

weekly for 60 months with $1,200 down payment and Customer Incentive applied.♦ Includes freight and fees. HST extra.

$1,000 CUSTOMER INCENTIVE♦

NOW STANDARD, TOYOTA SAFETY SENSE™ P~

- Pre-Collision System with Pedestrian Detection Function
- Automatic High Beam • Lane Departure Alert
- Dynamic Radar Cruise Control

XSE model shown.

2017 COROLLA

ALL-IN LEASE | 2017 CAMRY LE

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- Star Safety System™ with 10 Standard Airbags
- Display Audio with Bluetooth® and USB Input
- Air Conditioning • Backup Camera

XSE model shown.

2017 CAMRY

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NOW STANDARD, TOYOTA SAFETY SENSE™ P~

- Pre-Collision System with Pedestrian Detection Function
- Automatic High Beam • Lane Departure Alert
- Dynamic Radar Cruise Control

AWD Limited model shown.

2017 RAV4

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4X4 Double Cab TRD Sport Package model shown.

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STANDARD FEATURES:

- GoPro® Mount
- Rear Step Bumper
- Removable Locking Tailgate
- Power-Adjustable Heated Mirrors

4X4 Crew Max Limited 5.7L model shown

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STANDARD FEATURES:

- Over 10,000lbs of Towing Capacity
- 5.7 Litre i-Force V8 Engine
- 401 lb-ft of Torque
- Backup Camera

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Based on a maximum of 100,000KM/100,000KM/100,000KM/100,000KM/100,000KM. Additional KM charge of $0.07/$0.10/$0.10/$0.10/$0.15 for excess kilometres, if applicable. ♦$1,000/$1,000 Customer Incentive is valid on retail delivery of a new 2017 Corolla CE Manual (BURCEMA) / 2017 RAV4 FWD LE (ZFREVTB). Offer is valid to retail customers (excluding fleet sales) when leased, financed or purchased from an Ontario Toyota dealership. Customer Incentive will take place at time of delivery, include tax and will apply after taxes have been charged on the full amount of the negotiated price. Vehicles receiving Customer Incentives must be purchased, registered and delivered between January 4 to January 31, 2017 ▲$1,000 Lease Assist on a new 2017 Camry LE (BF1FLTA) is valid on Toyota retail delivery (excluding fleet sales) when leased from an Ontario Toyota dealership. Lease Assist includes tax and will be applied after taxes have been charged on the full amount of the negotiated price. Vehicles receiving Lease Assist must be leased, registered and delivered between January 4, 2017 and January 31, 2017. ▽Cash Savings is comprised of a Cash Customer Incentive and/or Customer Incentive. $4,000 Cash Savings is available on a new 2016 Venza AWD (excluding V6 models) and valid to retail customers (excluding fleet sales) except customers who lease or purchase finance from an Ontario Toyota dealership through Toyota Financial Services at a special rate of interest, offered by Toyota as part of a low rate interest program. All advertised lease and finance rates are special rates. Offers valid to retail customers (excluding fleet sales) when purchased from an Ontario Toyota dealership. Cash Savings will take place at time of delivery, include tax and will apply after taxes have been charged on the full amount of the negotiated price. 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